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NSC BRIEFING

4 May 1960

CUBA

I. Estrangement--now virtually complete--between Castro and Venezuelan President Betancourt further isolates Castro from other Latin American governments. Venezuela had been Fidel's closest ally.

A. Betancourt made clear his complete disenchantment with Castro during 26 April conversation with Ambassador Sparks.

1. He said he would be happy to play leading role in focusing hemisphere attention on Cuban problem, provided Dominican dictator ousted first.
2. Pro-Castro elements in Venezuela are influential and capable of causing considerable difficulties for Betancourt's regime.

B. Cuban government propaganda media now attacking Betancourt.

1. One broadcaster accused Venezuelan president of being democrat and revolutionary "only in small degree" and an anti-Communist solely to curry favor with US.
2. Castro himself, in May Day speech, derided "one Latin American leader" (obviously Betancourt) for suggesting that only elected governments should be in OAS.
3. Castro's propaganda has already vilified other democratic Latin American presidents (Fridzizi, Lleras Camargo, Alessandri, Lopez Mateos) as lackeys of imperialism.

II. Castro regime expanding propaganda media abroad.

A. Prensa Latina opening offices in London, Paris, and Prague,

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B. Havana radio broadcast reports Ministry of Communications plans for shortwave radio station "to bring truth about Cuban revolution to all Latin America."

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III. Sino-Soviet bloc ties with Cuba becoming closer.

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A. Soviet Ambassador Bazykin in Mexico prepared to leave for Cuba as soon as he gets expected instructions from Moscow

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B. Blas Roca, Cuban Communist Secretary General, met with Mao Tse-tung on 29 April, during visit to China.

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IV. May Day celebrations less well attended than expected and crowds appeared somewhat apathetic.

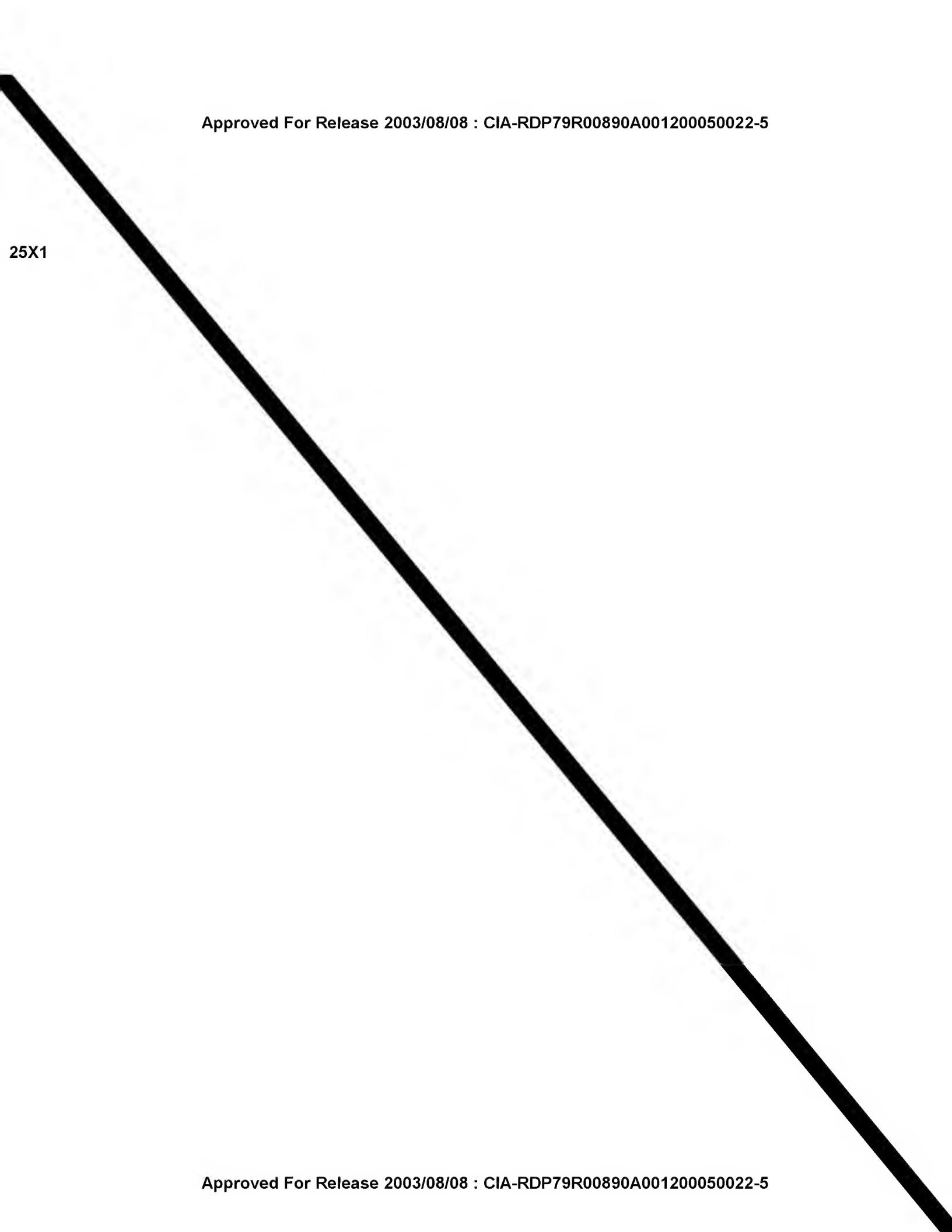
A. Castro's address was strongly anti-US as expected, but contained nothing he had not said before.

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